agreed that the next round of talks would be held in Islamabad in January|February, 1989.

Barring occasional exchange of fire, there have been no clashes in Siachen area during September and October, 1988.

Clearance of Irrigation Projects of Andhra Pradesh

554. DR. G. VIJAYA MOHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that eleven major and equal number of medium irrigation projects of Andhra Pradesh, are lying pending for clearance by the Central Government; and

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the Union Government have asked the State Government to inform whether it had the wherewithal to execute these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) No, Sir. Presently only six Major and six Medium projects are pending clearance.

(b) No such information has been requested for from the State Government.

Sex Determination tests in Ahmedabad

555. SHRI YALLA SESI BHUSHANA RAO: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to figures given by Forum against Sex determination that 10,000 female foetuses are destroyed every year in Ahmedabad; and

(b) if so, what measures Government proposes to take to put an end to this practice?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI MOTI LAL VORA): (a) and (b) No such report has been received in this Ministry. The exact incidence of femal foeticide after sex determination tests is not known as no study in this regard has been carried out.

The abortion of female foetuses following sex determination tests is a social problem. There is a need for social awareness in this regard. Government has taken steps to improve the status of women in the society. Department of Women and Child Development in the Ministry of Human Resource Development has been actively engaged in raising the status of women Issues like female literacy, women's employment, raising mean age of marriage of girls, improvement in the health status of women etc. are some of the important thrusts being undertaken in different programmes of the Government.

The Government of India constituted a Small Committee to go into the various aspects for regulating the use of sex determination tests. The committee suggested a draft Bill which has been sent to the State|UTs.

Deaths due to Encephalitis in Gorarhpur, Uttar Pradesh

556. SHRI VIRENDRA VERMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the daily deaths of a large number of persons due to encephalitis ranging in virulent form in the Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to provide central assistance to the Government of Uttar Pradesh to fight and eradicate the disease?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI MOTI LAL VORA): (a) Yes.

(b) Central Government has provided assistance in the form of insecticides and equipment, fogging machines and also technical guidance by sending team of experts from National Institute of Communicable Diseases|National Malaria Eradication Programme.

In addition, Government Medical Stores Depots have provided medicines and equipment on the basis of indents received from the State Governments.